

Zimbabwe tourism minister appoints APO Group's Beatrice Tonhodzayi to the board of the Zimbabwe Tourism Authority

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APO Group (www.APO-opa.com), the leading pan-African communications consultancy and press release distribution service, is delighted to announce that its account manager, Beatrice Tonhodzayi, has been appointed to the board of the Zimbabwe Tourism Authority (ZTA) (<https://ZimbabweTourism.net/>).

Tonhodzayi was appointed to the ZTA board by Zimbabwe's minister of environment, climate, tourism and hospitality industry, Nqobizitha Mangaliso Ndlovu, due to her vast experience and knowledge of the African media landscape.

Whilst continuing to work full-time at APO Group, Tonhodzayi will, as part of her role, offer strategic direction and guidance to ZTA's executive team. Her media relations expertise will allow ZTA to build upon Zimbabwe's reputation as a tourist destination, attracting positive international coverage and driving economic growth.

Other members of the ZTA board include **Precious Munzara**, a lecturer at Zimbabwe's Midlands State University, and Ray Mawerera, a marketing and PR expert who is the former president of the Zimbabwe Institute of Public Relations.

ZTA is responsible for tourism promotion, planning and development, research, and enforcement of standards and services. Its overarching goal is to promote the sustainable growth and development of tourism in Zimbabwe through market research, product development, investment promotion and destination marketing.

Tonhodzayi brings extensive experience to the board, and her appointment demonstrates the value of media relations in the promotion of tourism.

Tonhodzayi holds a Masters' in Business Administration from Zimbabwe's Midlands State University and a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Media Studies from the Zimbabwe Open University as well as diplomas in public relations and marketing.

She has worked in media and communications for many years across a number of disciplines including print and broadcast journalism, public relations, corporate communications, corporate social responsibility, stakeholder relationship management as well as HIV and gender advocacy.

For five years prior to joining APO Group, Tonhodzayi was the head of PR and corporate communications for the Zimpapers Group, Zimbabwe's largest media company.

She has also worked extensively in newspapers and radio, starting off as a reporter with *The Herald* and also becoming head of news and current affairs at Star FM between 2012 and 2016. She has produced and presented radio shows on several issues including health and gender.

Tonhodzayi has also worked in the NGO sector, providing HIV programming and training to media across southern Africa while with the Southern Africa HIV and AIDS Information Dissemination Service (SAfAIDS).

For the last year, Tonhodzayi has worked on some of APO Group's biggest public relations accounts, including Liquid Intelligent Technologies, Rugby Africa, and Paradigm Initiative, providing dedicated support as these prominent, diverse organisations looked to establish and develop their pan-African operations.

APO Group's model for African public relations is unique in the industry. Like Tonhodzayi, all APO Group account managers operate 'on the ground' in their native countries, providing local knowledge and expertise, and building deep relationships with local media. In the case of Zimbabwe, this has resulted in Tonhodzayi being asked to offer advice at the highest level of government, which demonstrates the level of talent working for APO Group across Africa.

APO Group has always been committed to the African hospitality and tourism industry, which it sees as crucial in helping to drive investment across the continent. Its clients in the sector include Radisson, Marriott, and SA Tourism in South Africa, while APO Group Founder and Chairman Nicolas Pompigne-Mognard (www.Pompigne-Mognard.com) is on the advisory board of the Africa Hotel Investment Forum (AHIF).

"In the last year working with APO Group I have relished the opportunity to build greater relationships with African media - both in Zimbabwe and beyond," said Beatrice Tonhodzayi. "I'm really excited to be able to bring some of that experience to support tourism in my home country. The Zimbabwe Tourism Authority is doing fantastic work in branding Zimbabwe as a leading tourist destination in Africa, and it is wonderful to be a part of that mission.

"We were looking for a dynamic board, with a diverse set of skills that could help us package this beautiful tourism destination called Zimbabwe in a way that would encourage people - both locals and foreigners - to visit and explore our country. Tonhodzayi's fantastic pan-African media experience will help us utilise multiple media platforms, including digital media, and will hopefully allow the Zimbabwe Tourism Authority to achieve all its public relations goals," said Nqobizitha Mangaliso Ndlovu, Zimbabwe's minister of environment, climate, tourism and hospitality industry.

"At APO Group, we are all extremely proud that Tonhodzayi has been recognised by her country's government as a leading expert in her field," said Nicolas Pompigne-Mognard, founder and chairman of APO Group. "She is extremely passionate about Zimbabwe, and that has shone through in the work she has done for APO Group. Her appointment to the Zimbabwe Tourism Authority demonstrates the value of her experience and expertise, and I am sure she will be a tremendous success in this role."

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